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THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

MAY 1st, 1861.

MUSICAL EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION,

By Dr. MARX, of Berlin.*

(Continued from page 21.)

OF THE DISPOSITION OR VOCATION FOR MUSIC.

Considering the importance which we attribute to musical education, and the large demands on time and powers which application to it requires, the question becomes serious: what result can be reasonably expected by each individual from his exertions in this pursuit?

This education, in order to be profitable, assumes certain predispositions in the pupil; and many a person may be drawn into a chain of labours and sacrifices, which, from want of natural appliances, may remain unrewarded. Many indeed, not ungifted individuals, capable of participating to a certain extent in art, being seduced by its charms, devote their whole lives to it, and discover too late that their musical power is not sufficient for the profession, although it enables them to increase their enjoyment of art, and to have a deeper inward perception of its richness and beauty. The danger of a grave error, perhaps of a life thrown away, is more considerable to a gifted individual, than to one not so endowed; and even in the minor case of a mere amateur, the question is so important, that we cannot pass it over in a serious view of musical education, although we cannot hope to give a general and particular answer, which shall be in all cases satisfactory.

All men, with extremely few exceptions, have a disposition for music. They have even *more disposition* than is generally attributed to them; more than they themselves are accustomed to think. But nothing is more common than that this disposition, unrecognized by hesitating prejudice, neglected through idleness and indifference, or led astray by erroneous treatment, should become suppressed. The extremely rare exceptions are manifested by a perfect indifference to music, even to its corporeal effect, or indeed, in some cases, by a physically perceptible repugnance to it. In this case, pleasurable sensations can be derived from the measure or the rhythm only.

It is much more difficult to decide *how far the disposition* of any determined individual extends; what may be expected from its cultivation; and whether it be such as to justify the adoption of music as the special vocation of life.

It may be asserted in general, *from hundreds*

of experiments and instances, and from the contemplation of the subject, that

The disposition of each individual is equivalent, and is worth cultivation, in proportion to the pleasure felt by the individual in the art itself.

The pleasure in the art itself, not in the many subsidiary gratifications it may produce, and which may accompany an artistic life—not, therefore, the caprice of fashion, to learn music because others do—not the vanity of being better educated, nor of gaining the highest prize by redoubled exertion; all these pleasures abandon us, either before or soon after we have accomplished our object; they have been our reward, such as it was, but they were not the true pleasures of art, which in the real artist grow with his growth, and are immortal as the soul that feels them. Hence, we see so many scholars, discontinuing, as soon as the days of instruction are past, all connexion with art; and hence, also, many a master, when his daily task is done, drags on the burthen of a weary life in an unloved profession, in useless sighs or resigned indifference.

But that the disposition exists in the proportion of our love of art, will be confessed by every keen observer of experience; and even without experience, we might infer that such would be the fact, since it would be purposeless to have a faculty implanted in us, which we have no power of calling into action.

He who takes pleasure in music, will soon try to imitate it; as we may remark in the youngest children, who generally sing, after their fashion, before they speak. *It is chiefly in the means* of musical employment, from ignorance of technicalities, that errors occur. A person may be seized with a desire to sing, but have only an indifferent voice, or rather, more probably, whose voice has been injured; or he may devote himself to an instrument, for the performance on which he is deficient in power or in corporal structure. But even in this latter case, nature will often maintain her rights, if the musical desire be original (not instilled or caught from example); and the insufficient organ will at last be developed, or it will be sustained by other powers, and completed or replaced. In all such cases, however, it is advisable to seek counsel from the skilled in the matter.

If, apparently contrary to our views, the disposition for and pleasure in music be so often concealed, or, indeed, seemingly absent,—or, if the advance or delay of the learner vary from our expectations, we shall be led to acknowledge the probability of our departure from the *system required by nature* for education in music, in addition to our doubtful judgment as to the musical disposition. This disposition is composed of several powers, which are sometimes found singly, and sometimes in combination, but each of which must be separately sought and nourished, long before musical instruction, commonly so

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called, begins. We must come to a clear understanding upon these points. They are decisive as to the question, whether music ought to be comprehended within the course of our occupations, and very important in the consequences of its admission.

Every participation in music presupposes that it makes some pleasurable impression either corporeal or mental. The most immediate is that which is produced by the mass of sound, or any particularly agreeable character of sound, the crash of a brass band, or the silvery tone of a little bell, &c. It is simply of an elementary and material nature, and warrants no mental participation, and therefore no mental disposition. It is only in the higher region that the spiritual effect of sound is perceived, and the corporeal sensations then show themselves to be a distinct portion of the disposition for art.

Our attention is next called to motion, measure, and rhythm. A deep meaning may be in rhythm; and the forms of bars are susceptible of endless variety, whereby significance is endeavoured to be shown. The groundwork of all this is the placing or distribution of more or less emphatic moments in equal measures of time. Rhythm and measure depend upon the fixing or estimating one *tone* to be twice, four times, or half, one fourth part, &c., as long as another. The process is facilitated by placing together parcels of moments collectively equal (though unequal among themselves) into equal divisions of time, which time within the divisions is divided in the simplest manner possible, by two or three, forming the bars of two or three parts, or of more parts in the same ratio. This is a matter merely of the understanding, of measuring and reckoning. The distinguishing of the chief and secondary parts of the bar, by accentuating the first, is also purely mechanical. We may therefore consider the rhythmic disposition to be within the capacity of any rational being. We may conclude further, from the multitudes of raw recruits who march in exact time, and of threshers, who wield the flail in perfect three or four-part order, that the idea that men in general are defective in the perception of measures in time, is a mere prejudice.

A higher qualification, quite distinct from the preceding, is the *perception of tone*; the capability of distinguishing different *tones*, and of forming a determined and more or less durable conception of their relation to each other.

The pitch, or height or depth of a *tone*, is represented scientifically by the number of vibrations of a sounding body which produces it. Leibnitz has even described Music (mathematically considered) as a concealed mental arithmetic, making unconscious calculations. But it seems more probable that the immediate apprehension of *tones* depends on a sympathy between the nerves of the hearer and the vibrations of the sounding body. The vibrations, however, of even inanimate bodies, produce sounds in other bodies

similarly tuned, and moreover, call forth different but related sounds: and we find also, that trained or imitating birds, and the youngest infants, when they begin to learn singing or whistling from us, become imbued with, and can reproduce *tones* and successions of tones simply from hearing them.

Hence we may presume that also the faculty of a musical ear is common to most, if not to all men, so far as they can hear at all. But in this particular quality, the degrees of endowment are widely different, according to inward disposition or foreign assistance. The Author has never met with an instance of any person incapable of perceiving the difference between low and high; but it is common to find persons unable to distinguish with certainty a tone from half a tone, a third from a fourth, or a fourth from a fifth, until after some instruction and practice. Smaller intervals, as for example, a comma, or even what is called a quarter-tone, are often unappreciable to otherwise gifted musicians, especially pianists; while on the other hand, the finest gradations are usually perceptible to persons not possessed of any considerable musical qualifications, such as experimenters in acoustics, and pianoforte-tuners, who have educated the ear to such minute discrimination.

It is very common to confound this fine appreciation of sounds, with talent for music; or at least, to consider it an indication of that talent. This, however, must not be assumed without many allowances. If this faculty be deficient or manifestly feeble, we may certainly suppose that the original powers of the mind have not been applied to the living sounds of music; nevertheless, more than one example can be named of very small or very imperfectly-developed appreciation of *tone*, accompanied by very considerable susceptibility for music.* On the other hand, the keenest perception of *tonic* differences is by no means a sign of, nay,—it is not essentially necessary for musical talent. Still less are certain external capabilities of this faculty, which are not uncommon, to be considered of any importance. Thus, there are persons not at all remarkable for musical talent, who can carry home with them from the orchestra the pitch of any piece of music, and reproduce it at pleasure. This is certainly not a useless faculty of memory, but it has no connexion with deeper powers, and may indeed rather indicate a diminished activity of the imagination, unless it have been acquired by long

* This seems to be particularly the case among the mass of the people of France. In that country, singing is perpetual, and yet it is, in an incredible proportion, false and unsteady in *tone*. The small development of the musical faculties, in this instance, seems to arise from the manner of life, more external than intellectual, of the nation. It is indicated by the circumstance, that, notwithstanding general education and a great susceptibility for music, so few great composers have been produced in France, and that the most remarkable advances in art in that country have been occasioned by foreigners, namely, Lully, Gluck, and Spontini. We Germans, however, remember with gratitude that our Gluck acquired his perfection and recognition in the bosom of the refinement and intellectual activity of that highly distinguished nation in his days, and that the susceptibility of that nation has shown an equally noble appreciation of Haydn and Beethoven.

habituation to the orchestra. On the other hand, it occasionally happens that highly-gifted singers and violinists permit themselves certain deviations from abstract purity of intonation, not from any want of perception, but from an impulse of the original and natural relations of sound, as distinguished from our artificial temperaments, or possibly from exaggerated expression.

If to these fundamental qualifications we add memory for musical compositions, a moderate activity of intellectual comprehension, and a certain degree of courage or confidence, with the necessary dexterity of limb, member, voice and speech,—we shall have assembled all the qualifications necessary for the cultivation of music. We should, however, never delay encouraging the growth of the higher faculties—the sensibility of the mind, and feelings for the significance of compositions, and of the forms of composition, and that direction of the mind which tends to give musical form and embodiment to sensations and ideas—the so potent spell and mystery of the poet-musician.

We have thus endeavoured to give a determined idea of disposition for music. It is, as we have seen, a combination of properties, and is therefore found in different states of completeness. It is rarely denied altogether to any individual, but seems to exist in the most diversified gradation and variety. But as this aptitude, like every other human faculty, is capable of indefinite extensions and improvement, it is never possible, at least in the beginning or before some cultivation, to predict how far we may expect any specified individual to advance. We must return to our original assumption—

Every one will advance or be led so far as his *sincere but unalloyed pleasure in music* calls him.

He, therefore, who has a susceptibility for music, and feels pleasure in it, may with confidence devote so much time and labour to it as his peculiar calling and circumstances may allow. So long as it is a labour of love to him, it will be a labour of profit also; and thus, to such a one, instruction will be no unnecessary nor useless burthen, until the limits of his faculties be attained. And let every one remember, that the chief end of all artistic education is no other than the exaltation of our susceptibility of and participation in art, for our greater happiness and improvement. In this view, neither will a heated imagination drag us into a professional life against nature and intention; nor will the poor ambition of showy attainments, quite foreign to the true idea of art, rob us of the genuine reward of our exertions.

He, however, who thinks he feels an impulse to devote his entire life to music, should examine seriously whether this impulse be not imaginary; whether it be not rather a feeling of occasional and momentary enthusiasm, than a permanent and steady love for art. Whether the chief inducement be not, perhaps, the apparently unrestrained

and joyous tenour of artistic life, or ambition excited by the brilliant career of others. These outward seductive allurements are, for the most part, bitterly repented of when too late. There are, indeed, examples of success attained under such insufficient motives, but rarely accompanied by inward satisfaction, and generally embittered by the loss of the real pleasure of art, and of bodily health.

Those, finally, who consider themselves called upon to adopt composition as a profession for life, should undergo a most rigid self-examination. Their calling is the highest, but it is also the most exacting and uncertain; and no one can counsel them with well-grounded decision. *No person ought to dedicate himself to this branch of the profession, unless constrained by every impulse of his soul*; no one who can endure with patience any other occupation—who is not willing to sacrifice, for the satisfaction of that vehement and restless vocation, all the security and comfort of his existence, and who cannot look with firmness on the chance of missing the chief aim of all his exertions. Such a vocation is generally, if not always, indicated in early years, by fanciful pre-luding, and attempts at composition. He who waits to compose, until he has learned the rules of composition, will rarely, if ever, be a composer. It is also to be considered, that a disposition thus early manifested, and in some degree fostered and nourished, has had time for development before the application of scientific rules,—that it is therefore in a more expanded and invigorated state, and gives the scholar the inestimable advantage of many imaginings and experiences, whereby confidence has been acquired, equally remote from timidity and from presumption. This advantage, however, is not indispensable. True love and perseverance, although later in the field—but not too late—may still gain the victory.

A composer by profession will, however, soon discover that his occupation cannot be the exclusive business of life, for the simple reason, that no one can compose always. Poetry, whether in *tones*, or words, or colours, demands the most vivid moments only of our existence; and with all the requirements for its production and exhibition, must still leave much of our lives in vacancy; the brightest and richest genius has no other destiny, neither would any other be enduring. Further still from the student, must be the vain and unhallowed hope of obtaining a competence by his productions. The greatest artists, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, were not able to accomplish that object. Such, indeed, has been sometimes effected by fashionable composers of the Italian Opera, patronized by the caprice of *prime donne*, but then only in advanced age. A subsidiary occupation has always been found necessary to a composer, such as singing, playing, conducting, or teaching; and notwithstanding the hindrance and burthen this occupation may perhaps now and then seem, it

will be found a salutary and invigorating companion. Each of these occupations has a favorable and important aspect to the composer—one or more of them he must embrace, and this circumstance should have due weight in the choice of the profession.

(To be continued.)

HEREFORD MUSICAL FESTIVAL, 1861.

THE following arrangements have been made by the Committee. The Festival will, as usual, be held in the Cathedral and Shire Hall, and will take place on September 10th, and three following days. Full Choral Service, by the members of the Choirs of Hereford, Gloucester, and Worcester, will be performed daily at half-past 8. The sacred works will be given as follows:—1st morning: *Elijah*. 2nd morning: Spohr's *Last Judgment*, and the principal part of Handel's Oratorio, *Samson*. 3rd morning: "Spring," from Haydn's *Seasons*; Mozart's *Requiem*—the few alterations requisite to fit this great work for performance in a Cathedral will be made in the original words; and Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*. 4th morning: Handel's *Messiah*; it is proposed to give this Oratorio without the omissions generally made. The leading works in the evening programme will be:—1st concert: Overture, *Euryanthe*—Weber; Pastoral Symphony—Beethoven; and a Flute solo. 2nd concert: Overture, *Anacreon*—Cherubini; Italian Symphony—Mendelssohn; and a Violin solo. 3rd concert: Overtures, *Wood Nymphs*—Sterndale Bennett, and *William Tell*—Rossini; and Benedict's popular Cantata, *Undine*. In order to gratify the taste of the lovers of music for stringed instruments, a short concert of Chamber Music will be given at the College Hall, on Friday evening, commencing at about 7, and terminating before 9; thus preventing any interference with the grand ball at the Shire Hall, at the termination of the Festival.

The vocalists engaged are Madlle. Titiens, Miss Louisa Pyne, Madame Weiss, Madame Sainton-Dolby, Miss Susan Pyne, Mr. Sims Reeves, Signor Giuglini, Mr. Montem Smith, Mr. Winn, and Mr. Weiss. The instrumental band has been increased, not only in numbers, but in talent; Mr. Blagrove is to be the principal violin. The utmost care has been used in the selection of the chorus, so as to preserve the high character given of the musical performances in 1858.

A programme containing finer works has never yet been issued; a glance at the names of the composers, and a list of the works will, it is hoped, give general satisfaction, and ensure deserved patronage.—*Hereford Times*.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. A.—No alteration has taken place in the standard pitch of instruments having fixed tones, in consequence of the discussion which has been raised upon the subject. A concise explanation of the Gregorian Notation, compiled by J. Alfred Novello, is published at 69, Dean Street, Soho, price 1s. 6d.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

We would request those who send us country newspapers, wishing us to read particular paragraphs, to mark the passage, by cutting a slip in the paper near it.

Colored Envelopes are sent to all Subscribers whose payment in advance is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscriber neglects to renew. We again remind those who are disappointed in getting back numbers, that only the music pages are stereotyped, and of the rest of the paper, only sufficient are printed to supply the current sale.

Notices of concerts and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence, otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance. All communications must be authenticated by the proper name and address of the writer.

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

ANDOVER.—The Choral Society gave their fourth concert on Easter Tuesday, in the Town Hall. The room was crowded. The performance of music, both sacred and secular, was considered a great improvement. Two instrumental duets were played, one by Miss Eliza Criswick and Mr. Bennett, the conductor; and the other by Miss Sincock and Mr. Bennett.

BLIND SCHOOL.—The anniversary meeting of the London Society for teaching the blind to read, and for training them in industrial occupations (which is established in the Upper Avenue Road, Regent's Park), took place at the Hanover Square Rooms on the 19th of April, the Lord Mayor in the chair. There was a well-selected programme of music upon the occasion, which was very efficiently performed by the pupils. Anthems and other choral pieces were sung, and several of the pupils played with much taste and execution. Mr. Edwin Barnes conducted. The pupils also exhibited their improvement in reading and other useful accomplishments.

BURNLEY, Middlesex.—Miss Coyne, late organist of St. Saviour's, Chelsea, has been appointed organist of the Church at Burnley.

CHELTEMHAM.—Messrs. Hale and Son's two concerts were held on the afternoon and evening of Tuesday, the 9th ult., at the Assembly Rooms. The artistes secured for the occasion comprised Madame Albani, Miss Arabella Goddard, Giulio Regondi, Mdle. Sedlatzek, Sig. Cosselli, and Mr. Land, with Herr Goldberg as the accompanist.

CHEPSTOW.—Mr. Drew's Amateur Concert took place at the Assembly Rooms on the 3rd of April. The principal vocalists were Miss Kate Morris and Miss Caroline Crosse, as well as a select choral class. Instrumentalists—the band of the New Philharmonic.

CHERTSEY.—The fourth annual concert of the Choral Association was given on the 4th ult. The programme consisted of glees, madrigals, part-songs, and solos. Mr. Samuel Gee conducted, and Mr. Melvin Peat was the accompanist.

CHIPPING NORTON.—A concert was given on Tuesday, April 2nd, in the Town Hall, by Mr. John Rudkin, of All Saints, Margaret Street, Cavendish Square, assisted by Miss Graham, Miss Emma Jackson, Messrs. G. Nunn, R. Edmonds, and W. R. Pocock. The first part of the programme was selected from the works of Mendelssohn and Bishop. The concert gave universal satisfaction.

COMMERCIAL ROAD.—On Monday evening, April 15th, the members of the St. Andrews' Choir, conducted by Mr. W. S. Whiteley, and assisted by Mr. Bridge and several other ladies and gentlemen, gave their second musical entertainment in the school-room adjoining St. Andrews' Scotch Church, Philpot Street. Pianist, Master J. Meen. The programme, comprising choruses, duets, solos, trios, quartets, &c., was well selected, and gave much satisfaction.

DEVIZES.—The third concert given this season by the Amateur Vocal Society, took place at the Town Hall, on Tuesday, April 2nd, when selections from Mozart's Twelfth Mass, the *Elijah*, *Judas Maccabæus*, and the *Messiah*, were performed. Accompanist, Mr. W. Sly. Mr. C. Clarke conducted as usual, and Mr. J. T. Abraham presided at the harmonium.

DORCHESTER.—A sacred concert was given in the Town Hall of this place, by the members of the Portland Choral Society, (numbering about forty), on Easter Wednesday, April 3rd. The first part of the programme consisted of selections from Handel's *Judas Maccabæus*. The songs were given by Mr. Stone and Mr. Sweeting. The second part consisted of selections from other sacred

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